

# Jeremiah 51:48

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon: for the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the LORD.

## Analysis

**Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon: for the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the LORD.** This verse presents cosmic celebration at Babylon's fall. **The heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing** uses ranan (רָנַן), meaning to cry out in joy, shout, or sing jubilantly—the response of all creation to God's righteous judgment. This personification appears throughout Scripture: creation rejoices when God acts in justice (Psalm 96:11-13, Isaiah 44:23, 49:13).

The reason for celebration follows: **for the spoilers shall come unto her from the north.** The shodedim (שׁוֹדֵדִים, spoilers/destroyers) are the Medo-Persian forces, and **from the north** indicates their geographic approach—Cyrus came from Media (northwest) toward Babylon. Ironically, Babylon itself attacked Jerusalem "from the north" (Jeremiah 1:14-15, 4:6, 6:1); now judgment comes from the same direction. This demonstrates lex talionis (law of retribution)—Babylon receives the same treatment it inflicted on others. The phrase **saith the LORD** (ne'um-YHWH, נְאֻם־יְהוָה) is the prophetic authentication formula, emphasizing this is not Jeremiah's opinion but God's decree. Creation's joy reflects God's own satisfaction in executing justice (Ezekiel 5:13).

## Historical Context

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The Medo-Persian Empire under Cyrus II conquered Babylon in 539 BC, coming from the north and east. The conquest was remarkably swift and relatively bloodless—Cyrus diverted the Euphrates River, entering through the riverbed while Babylon feasted (Daniel 5). The Nabonidus Chronicle (a Babylonian historical text) confirms Cyrus entered "without battle." For nations oppressed by Babylon—including Judah, Egypt, Assyria's remnants, and many others—this conquest brought relief and hope. The Jewish exiles particularly rejoiced because Cyrus's decree (538 BC) allowed them to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:1-4, Isaiah 44:28). The cosmic celebration imagery reflects the broader deliverance of many peoples from Babylonian tyranny. This fulfillment strengthens confidence in Revelation's promise of final judgment on all oppressive systems (Revelation 18:20, 19:1-6).

## Related Passages

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**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. Why does creation itself celebrate when God executes justice against oppressive powers?
2. How does the irony of Babylon being attacked 'from the north' (as it attacked others) demonstrate divine justice?
3. What does this cosmic rejoicing at judgment teach about God's character and purposes in history?

## Interlinear Text

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וְרִנָּה וְ	עַל	בָּבֶל	שָׁמַיִם	וְאֶרֶץ
and all that is therein shall sing	H5921	for Babylon	Then the heaven	and the earth
H7442		H894	H8064	H776
לְכָל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּהֵם	כִּי	מִצָּפֹן
H3605	H834	H0	H3588	unto her from the north
			H6828	shall come
				H935
הַשׁוֹדֵדִים	נֹאֵם	יְהוָה:		
for the spoilers	saith	the LORD		
H7703	H5002	H3068		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Revelation 18:20** (Parallel theme): Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

**Isaiah 44:23** (Sin): Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

**Jeremiah 50:3** (Parallel theme): For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.

**Isaiah 49:13** (Sin): Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

**Isaiah 48:20** (Sin): Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob.